World's On Fire

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by MeteoraWrites

Summary

WIll is sitting on the edge of the porch, his bare feet on the cold ground, and his arms wrapped around himself. He's clearly still overheated but holds himself and shivers slightly as if freezing from the late winter chill that hangs in the mid-morning air.

Tilting his head, Hannibal studies him a moment before stepping off the porch and holding out a hand in offering to Will. "We should go back inside, Will. It's far too cold to be out here for long."

Will looks at Hannibal's hand a moment, debating if he wants to try and argue. He feels like he's on fire. The winter air is helping to cool him off and clear the fog that threatens to overtake his mind, but it's also making his overly sensitive skin hurt a little. And he knows that probably isn't a good thing.

Reluctantly, Will takes Hannibal's hand.

Notes

So I actually started this after I posted the previous story and just majorly dragged at finishing it. So yay for being manic I guess because I finally got the end typed out. That said, please let me know if I have typos or whatever. Manic and dyslexic isn't a good combo.

Hope you all enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes

The quiet Hannibal encounters upon exiting his car is almost unsettling. His mind automatically associates Will's home with the sounds and scent of a pack of happy, well cared for dogs. Now, there is just the lingering scent the pack has left behind to mark the property as theirs, and Will's own starting to overtake the mix.

The smell of Will's heat faintly escapes through the few windows he's cracked open for fresh air. When Hannibal manages to get a good whiff on the breeze it's strong and heady. Wild clover blossoms carried on the slightly salty ocean breeze. Hannibal prides himself on his willpower. And right now the scent that fills his nostrils as he approaches Will's front door is already testing that willpower greatly.

Will is opening the door before Hannibal can even step foot on the porch. He's clad in just a pair of navy boxer shorts and a grey t-shirt that clings to him with sweat. He's panting lightly. Gold creeping into his irises as he takes in the sight of the alpha at this door. "Hello, Hannibal..."

"Hello, Will." Hannibal returns the greeting with a broad smile and holds up the small basket he's brought with him. "I hope you like orange sweet rolls. I believe they might still be warm. They came out of the oven just moments before I left."

The tired smile Will gives is answer enough, and he stands aside, inviting Hannibal in and closing the door behind him.

The smell inside is more intense than Hannibal was expecting. He takes a deep breath through his nose, taking in the mix of Will's natural scent mixed with slick, anxiety, and the faintest traces of Will's dogs buried underneath it all. He can feel himself starting to react already, eyes undoubtedly bleeding red as he begins to grow hard beneath the soft fabric of his trousers. He clears his throat. Bites down on his tongue hard until he tastes a coppery hint of blood to calm himself.

Will doesn't seem to notice Hannibal's reaction. He ends up standing close enough for Hannibal to feel the heat radiating from his body as he opens the small basket and pulls out one of the lightly glazed pastries. "These must have taken you all morning to make, you didn't have to go to all that trouble…"

Hannibal huffs a small laugh and leans a little closer, enjoying the warmth and the scent of happiness that comes from Will at the realization Hannibal brought him such a thoughtful treat for breakfast. "Nonsense. I promised to look after you in the coming days, Will. Preparing breakfast was no trouble at all. Besides, you know my feelings about cooking. I would much rather take the time to provide us both something pleasant for breakfast than settle for one of those overly processed, pre-made meals they sell for alphas and omegas to live off of in these situations."

"Alright, I get your point," Will says with a chuckle before crossing the room to sit on the edge of his bed. It's got more blankets on it than usual. Pillows too. It looks much more comfortable like this. Will picks at the roll in his hand, pulling a piece off and popping it into his mouth. A pleased hum that's close to a purr escaping him at the first taste.

“You’re far more coherent than your email led me to expect you to be this morning. Has it been long since the symptoms of your heat began?” Hannibal asks as he sets the basket on the bed beside Will and moves to take his jacket off. He’s forgone his usual, somewhat formal, attire. Instead, donning a pair of soft cotton trousers and his favorite red sweater.

“An hour, maybe two… I’m not exactly sure what time it was when I woke up to be totally honest,” Will admits before pulling off another piece of his roll, effectively unraveling it as he eats. “I’ll get hazier over the course of the day. I usually spend the first half of the day making sure I have enough food prepared, and then I’ll sleep through the afternoon while I know I can get the rest.”

Humming in understanding, Hannibal comes and takes a seat on the edge of Will’s bed, leaving enough space between them to make sure Will feels comfortable. “In that case, once you’ve finished your breakfast perhaps you would like to rest a while? I can spend the time preparing the ingredients we will need for a few quick meals.”

Will looks torn at the suggestion, a part of him wants to do that himself because it’s what he’s used to. Another part doesn’t want to be away from the alpha now that he’s here, even if it is just a thin wall with an open doorway in the space between to separate them. But he nods and finishes his roll before reaching for another. “I fully stocked the fridge and pantry, so there should be plenty of food for you to work with. I’m afraid my kitchen isn’t quite up to your standard, though…”

“I’ve seen the amenities in your kitchen before, Will. I’m confident you have everything I will need to take care of us both over the next several days,” Hannibal assures with a small smile. He isn’t planning on preparing them anything extravagant. He was thinking of making some sort of stew a for starters. Something filled with plenty of meat and vegetables that’s easy to quickly warm and eat.

“Alright, if you’re sure, then by all means fix whatever you feel like making. You know I’ll eat just about anything,” he aims to be funny, but it falls a bit flat as he yawns at the end.

The yawn earns a chuckle from the alpha.“Get some rest, Will. I’ll be just a few feet away if you need me.” Hannibal does his best to speak gently. No hint of an order or command buried in his tone. He isn’t Will’s mate and Will made it quite clear in his email that he doesn’t want Hannibal to be controlling with him unless Will is about to hurt himself in some way. Which isn’t likely, but it’s still a completely reasonable request given what Will disclosed about his past experiences with other alphas.

With another yawn, Will scoots back further onto his bed and starts to arrange the mound of pillows into something more comfortable he can snuggle in against. “Wake me if you need help with anything,” he offers. Not honestly expecting Hannibal to need help in the kitchen. He took care of Will’s dogs before. He made their food from scratch, just like Will instructed. He likely knows Will’s kitchen, as well as Will, does at this point.

“Of course,” Hannibal promises as he takes the still mostly full basket of rolls and sets them over on Will’s desk for later. He resists the urge to stay in the room and watch Will get comfortable and doze off. A primal part of him growling deep down that he needs to watch

over Will. He ignores it. Reminds himself that what he is doing now is an important step in taking care of Will.

Once he is in the next room the urge to go back gets stronger, but it helps that the smell of fresh herbs and the various ingredients he pulls from the pantry and fridge have an almost cleansing effect on his mind. It helps to block out a little of Will's scent. But only a little. It's enough to let him focus on the task at hand. Cutting meat and chopping vegetables.

Somewhere in the middle of browning the meat for the stew, maybe an hour later, he hears Will get out of bed. At first, he assumes it's to use the restroom, but when Will's footsteps move away rather than closer he turns his head to look through the open doorway.

Will is clearly still half asleep. One hand rubbing at his eyes as he moves closer to the front door of the house.

"Is everything alright?" Hannibal asks, drawing the omega's attention away from the door and over to him.

Will blinks a few times, the hand that had been rubbing his eyes moving to scratch at the back of his head. "I need some air, it's too stuffy in here." The house has indeed grown quite warm as Hannibal began to cook. Even with added ventilation from the few windows Will had cracked open before the alpha arrived.

"Perhaps you would like to put on something a bit warmer before stepping out?" Hannibal suggests with a small frown. Will is only wearing his boxers and t-shirt still. Both of which are clinging to him with sweat and slick.

Will looks down at himself as if forgetting what exactly he's wearing at the moment before shaking his head and reaching for the doorknob. "If I do that I'll pass out from the heat. I just need to go outside and cool off for a minute…"

As much as he dislikes the idea, Hannibal says nothing and watches as Will opens the door and steps outside. He leaves the main door open, only closing the storm door behind him, It's screened window is open so that the cool breeze can enter the house. The fresh air is nice, but as soon as it hits Hannibal it's clear that the temperature is far too low for Will to stay out there long, even with his core temperature rising due to his heat.

He finishes browning the meat for the stew, which only takes him about two more minutes, before turning off the stove and moving to join Will outside.

The omega is sitting on the edge of the porch, his bare feet on the cold ground, and his arms wrapped around himself. He's clearly still overheated but holds himself and shivers slightly as if freezing from the late winter chill that hangs in the mid-morning air.

Tilting his head, Hannibal studies him a moment before stepping off the porch and holding out a hand in offering to Will. "We should go back inside, Will. It's far too cold to be out here for long."

Will looks at Hannibal's hand a moment, debating if he wants to try and argue. He feels like he's on fire. The winter air is helping to cool him off and clear the fog that threatens to overtake his mind, but it's also making his overly sensitive skin hurt a little. And he knows that probably isn't a good thing.

Reluctantly, Will takes Hannibal's hand. A small whine escaping him as Hannibal pulls him to his feet. He really doesn't want to go back just yet, but he knows Hannibal is just trying to look out for him.

"Perhaps it would help to open the windows a bit more?" Hannibal suggests as he guides Will back into the house with an arm around his shoulders. Sticking to safe areas to touch. Will doesn't tense or pull away as he worried he might, but rather leans into Hannibal's side and sighs.

"Yeah, alright…" Will agrees with a slightly dazed-looking glance to Hannibal out the side of his eye. "Could you…?"

Nodding, Hannibal walks Will back over to his bed and helps him get re-situated atop the covers before he steps around to open the windows a bit wider. He doesn't open them far, just enough to get a bit of the breeze really circulating in the warm space.

Hannibal watches Will a moment, making sure he's comfortable before returning to his task in the next room. He still has to get the stew simmering, and prep the ingredients for a few other quick meals he can have ready whenever Will feels up to eating over the next few days.

It's been years since he's helped an omega through their heat, but he always hated the idea of just ordering delivery or fixing those pre-made meals that are no better for the body than high-calorie dog food. Disgusting.

Around noon Hannibal finds himself having to coax a half-asleep Will to sit up with him long enough to mindlessly nibble his way through a sandwich and half a dozen carrot sticks. It helps that Will ends up leaning against Hannibal's side, his head on the alpha's shoulder while Hannibal helps him eat. It gives him an excuse to sit and openly breathe in Will's scent.

He'd become so used to it being covered with that god awful shaving lotion that smelling it unaltered is almost addictive. He must have showered that morning or maybe the night before because there isn't a trace of aftershave to be found in his scent or even clinging to his bedding. It's nice. Let's Hannibal commit it more easily to memory.

He finds himself wondering what it will smell like mixed with his own scent. His scent has a hint of clover to it as well, though more like the plant itself and not the blossoms that Will's scent resembles. And it's mostly covered by the rich scent of something akin to the freshly cut wood of an ash tree and semi-sweet notes of hazel. Mischa used to tease him for smelling like the garden when they were young children, but he always quite liked the way he smells.

The scent of Hannibal's soap and cologne cover the fainter notes of his scent more often than not. Designed to highlight the ash more than anything. He didn't use either of which today,

instead, going for a scentless soap so as not to agitate Will's heightened sense of smell. And after working all morning in the kitchen Hannibal's scent is easily noticed.

Will definitely seems to be noticing his scent one they've finished their meal. Hannibal is fully prepared to help Will lay back down to rest but instead finds a hand clutching his sweater over the center of his chest. Will's head turns, nose brushing the skin of Hannibal's throat over his collar. Scenting the alpha for the first time since his arrival.

Hannibal holds still, letting Will breathe him in. He can practically hear the gears ticking along inside of Will's head as he analyzes Hannibal's scent. Baser instincts working out if Hannibal is an acceptable mate. Even if he's just a temporary one at that.

After what feels like forever Will relaxes into his side and a soft purr rumbles through his chest. His grip on Hannibal's sweater loosens then, and his head twits so his chin is sitting on Hannibal's shoulder, bleary blue eyes looking up at the Alpha, who looks back with one eyebrow raised curiously. "Stay with me..?"

Hannibal turns his head fully to better look Will in the eyes. "I believe, in this instance, the wise decision would be for me to return to the kitchen and finish my work before joining you…" he says carefully. He wants to stay. Lay in bed and wrap himself around the Omega. Scent and touch him. Find the spots on his body that make him tremble and ask for more. Will was very detailed on what he does and doesn't like when it came to that section of his email and Hannibal wants to explore that information greatly. But he was also clear that he doesn't want to be touched like that on the first day of his heat.

"Allow me to return to my preparations, and I promise to be back to you as quickly as time allows," Hannibal bargains, hoping to assuage some of Will's feelings about being alone now that his heat delirium is setting in. He can see the disappointment flash in Will's eyes, but he doesn't argue. Just lets his fingers slowly release Hannibal's sweater as he pulls away and leans back against the wall behind him.

"Alright," Will agrees tiredly. He raises his hand, scrubbing at his face as he yawns. It's the hand that had been clutching at Hannibal's sweater, traces of his scent lingering there. He inhales deeply as he drags his hand down his face, body relaxing with the exhale.

Watching him, Hannibal is suddenly struck with the thought to do the one thing he knows Will help to soothe Will for the time being. He strips out of his sweater, careful not to pull too harshly and damage the soft material. He turns, holding it out to a puzzled looking Will, who takes it and clutches it to his chest like a child might with a stuffed animal when sleepy. The soft texture and overwhelming scent of Hannibal clinging to it immediately gets him purring again.

"I won't be long," Hannibal promises as he climbs to his feet and picks up the few dishes from their meal.

Will nods and lets his body sink down into the nest of pillows and blankets, Hannibal's red sweater still held close. His eyes are closed. Purr still rumbling through his chest. He looks physically uncomfortable still. Sweaty and a bit like his skin must feel too tight. But holding

Hannibal's sweater is like a lifeline through the storm beginning to rage through his body and it clearly brings him some comfort.

Hannibal has to bite his tongue hard enough to taste blood once again before he can force himself to return to his preparations. The sight of Will alone makes Hannibal want to abandon all else to take care of the omega. Soothe his building distress.

He rushes through the last of his prep work. Allowing himself to be a bit sloppy with his work only this once. Will lets out a soft whine every once in a while that has Hannibal's resolve crumbling quickly. The smell of stew and other freshly cooked goods hanging thick in the air does little to hide the growing scent of slick and needy omega. It has Hannibal battling an internal war that he is fully intent on winning.

It's mid-afternoon by the time he feels there is enough food and refillable bottles of water and other drinks prepared. The fridge looks ready to burst. As it was he had to move a few items they won't be needing to the deep freezer Will has stowed away in the back of the house just to make sure everything they'll need for the next several days fits.

The second the door to the fridge is shut Hannibal is moving quickly back out to the living room.

Will is curled into a ball in the middle of the bed, back to the open window as he dozes with his face buried in Hannibal's sweater. He barely stirs as Hannibal sits down on the edge of the bed and reaches out to press the back of his fingers to Will's forehead. Feeling the warmth radiating as his body continues to heat up.

A shiver runs through Will at the touch, and he lets out a sound somewhere between a sigh and a moan. Hannibal's fingers feel good against his skin. Not as warm as his own, they offer a little relief in his discomfort.

Blinking open hazy blue eyes, Will stretches out and rolls onto his back before turning his head to look at Hannibal, who watches him with that blank face he so often has when he's trying to control his emotions. Not that the expression registers to Will in the moment. All that registers is that Hannibal is there. And shirtless. And smelling like the best damn thing in the world right now. He reaches a hand out to grab hold of Hannibal's wrist, giving a weak pull once he has it in his grasp.

Hannibal goes along easily, allowing himself to be dragged down so he's laying on his side. Will rolls so they're face to face and drags Hannibal's hand up so that it ends up cradling Will's face. It sends another shiver through the omega, who signs in relief at the calm it brings him.

"What do you need?" Hannibal asks softly as he slides his hand higher and runs his fingers through Will's hair, nails scratching his scalp lightly in an attempt to further relax him.

A soft whine leaves Will's lips and he has to swallow a few times before he speaks. Looking up at Hannibal with pleading eyes he says "You. All I need is you."

Hannibal pulls him in close then, tucking Will's head under his chin so that he can scent the alpha all he likes. He takes care wrapping his arms around Will's shoulders, comforting him but not holding so tight as to make him feel trapped. When Will relaxes into the embrace and snakes an arm around Hannibal's own waist to gain more contact, Hannibal breathes a sigh of relief.

It's a struggle not to do more than just hold Will. He feels the red bleed into his eyes and his body react to Will's warmth and inviting scent. The only thing keeping him in check is the years he's spent building his willpower and restraint. He's a patient man. He can wait. He will wait. Not to do so would be the worst possible thing he could do to Will at this point. And he cares too much for the omega to do that to him.

Will falls asleep soon after Hannibal joins him in bed. Body totally at ease in the alpha's arms. A soft purr rumbling through his chest and reverberating through Hannibal's own. It relaxes him to the point of drifting off himself not long after Will with his nose pressed into the soft brown curls atop his head. Neither of them wakes again that evening. Both falling into a deep sleep that they definitely will need before dealing with what will come with the next sunrise.

End Notes

What do you think? Ready for Will's heat to hit and Hannibal to have to navigate all that?

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